

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 284106

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:ET, SO, UR, MASS, PBOR

SUBJECT:US-SOVIET CONTACTS ON HORN

REF: ADDIS ABABA 6605 (NOTAL)

1. IN YOUR CALL ON RATANOV NOVEMBER 29, WE FEEL IT
WOULD BE USEFUL IF YOU WOULD REGISTER FOLLOWING
POINTS:

(A) US IS CONCERNED AND DISAPPOINTED AT
SOVIET USE OF ARMS SUPPLIES AS AN INSTRUMENT OF
POLICY IN THE HORN OF AFRICA. SOMALIS WERE ABLE
TO ATTACK ETHIOPIA BECAUSE THE USSR PROVIDED LARGE
QUANTITIES OF ARMS GROSSLY IN EXCESS OF ANY SOMALI
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DEFENSIVE REQUIREMENT. THEN WHEN OPPORTUNITY
PRESENTED ITSELF TO IMPROVE ITS POSITION IN
ETHIOPIA, USSR MOVED TO DO SO THROUGH INFUSION OF
VAST AMOUNTS OF ARMS. AS A RESULT, BOTH SIDES ARE
FIGHTING OGADEN WAR WITH SOVIET ARMS.

(B) WE FEEL FOREGOING IMPOSES OBLIGATION ON USSR TO

MAKE SERIOUS EFFORTS TO STOP THE BLOODSHED IN THE HORN

AND ENCOURAGE A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. A STEP TOWARD ENDING THE BLOODSHED WOULD BE TO STOP FURTHER ARMS SHIPMENTS TO THE AREA.

(C) WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT SOVIETS FEEL THEIR PRESENT SUPPORT FOR ETHIOPIA GAINS FAVOR FOR THEM THROUGHOUT AFRICA SINCE THEY ARE SUPPORTING THE PRINCIPLE OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. IF SO, WE FEEL SOVIETS ARE DELUDING THEMSELVES. AFRICANS WE HAVE TALKED TO ABOUT THE OGADEN HAVE AT TOP OF THEIR PRIORITIES THE EXTRACTION OF SUPERPOWER INVOLVEMENT IN THE OGADEN PROBLEM. THAT BEING AN AFRICAN PROBLEM, THE AFRICANS FEEL STRONGLY THAT AN AFRICAN SOLUTION SHOULD BE FOUND FOR IT. THE AFRICANS FEEL, AS DO WE, THAT THE PROPER COURSE FOR THE SOVIET UNION IS TO SUPPORT THE OAU'S EFFORT TO MEDIATE A SETTLEMENT.

(D) FURTHER, WE MUST LOOK AHEAD TO THE POSSIBILITY OF A SUCCESSFUL ETHIOPIAN STRIKE TOWARDS SOMALIA. WE SHOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT THE SOVIET POSITION IS ON AN ETHIOPIAN MOVE INTO SOMALIA. WE THINK THAT IF ETHIOPIA CROSSES THE INTERNATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED BORDER, IT WOULD NOT ONLY SERIOUSLY UNDERCUT
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ETHIOPIA'S OWN PUBLIC POSITION, BUT WOULD MAKE A NEGOTIATED STABLE SOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT EVEN MORE DIFFICULT. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE YOU SHOULD COUNSEL THE EPMG STRONGLY AGAINST SUCH A MOVE. WE ALSO NOTE THAT THE USE OF SOVIET-SUPPLIED ARMS IN SUCH A CAMPAIGN WILL CANCEL OUT WHATEVER MERIT THE SOVIETS MAY HAVE ACCRUED IN AFRICAN EYES IN SUPPORT OF ETHIOPIA'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY.

(E) FOR OUR PART, WE HAVE MADE A DEMARCHE TO SOMALI PRESIDENT SIAD URGING HIM TO RECOGNIZE THAT NO MILITARY SOLUTION CAN LAST, SINCE VICTORY BY ONE SIDE WILL ONLY STIMULATE THE OTHER IN TIME TO SEEK ITS OWN MILITARY SOLUTION; THAT ONLY A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AGREED TO BY BOTH SIDES HAS ANY CHANCE OF PERMANENCE; AND THAT HE SHOULD NOW START THINKING OF WHAT, SHORT OF HIS DESIRED GOALS, HE WOULD BE WILLING TO ACCEPT IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A SETTLEMENT. WE WOULD SAY THE SAME TO THE ETHIOPIANS IF WE HAD THE KIND OF RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM THAT PERMITTED SUCH FRANK EXCHANGES. WE DO NOT. THE SOVIETS DO. WE URGE THE SOVIETS TO MAKE SUCH A DEMARCHE TO MENGISTU. VANCE

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